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Daily Devotional - Monday, January 21, 2019 - Overcoming Life's Ups and Downs

JANUARY 21ST 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Philippians 4:10-13

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Have you ever heard a testimony from someone who has been through a horrible tragedy and seen firsthand the faithfulness of God in that situation? We pay close attention to these accounts because they inspire us to trust the Lord. And of all the witnesses to God's grace in times of trouble, none is more compelling than the apostle Paul.

Paul was no stranger to hardship. Throughout his ministry, he was dragged, beaten, stoned, arrested, shipwrecked, and accused of heresy by both the Jewish leaders and the Roman government (2 Corinthians 11:23-28). This was certainly a contrast to his early life, when he enjoyed opportunities that his Roman citizenship and Jewish education provided.

In the midst of these amazing ups and downs in his life, Paul discovered a valuable lesson. In Philippians 4:11, he writes, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." His attitude didn't change with his circumstances—it remained constant whether he had plenty or was in need (Phil. 4:12).

Paul referred to this contentment as a "secret" but then revealed the source of this attitude in the very next verse: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). He is speaking, of course, about Jesus.

In ourselves, there is no way we can muster contentment in every situation. But once we understand that God works through our trials to make us more like His Son and that our union with Christ strengthens us to endure and even rejoice, we have a strong foundation for contentment no matter what is going on around us.

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